

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

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VOL. VIII. No. 2

TORONTO, APRIL 15th, 1927

Price 10 Cents

ART, THE INITIATOR

By F. B. HOUSSER

In Whitman's poem, "The Answerer," Whitman says:—

The singers do not beget, only the Poet begets,

The singers are welcom'd, understood, appear often enough, but rare has the day been, likewise the spot, of the birth of the maker of poems, the Answerer.

When I was asked to speak tonight on the subject of art and artists, it seemed to me that in a talk of this sort one ought at the beginning to explain what he means by the terms he uses. There are almost as many ideas of art and artists as there are people to have ideas, and anyone who talks about art should therefore take pains so far as he can to avoid misunderstanding.

The passage I have just quoted from Whitman gives his idea of the artist, for when he speaks of the poet he means the great creative artist who is a seer. Whitman distinguishes between the Poet and the Singer. The Poet, he says, is an answerer, that is he answers the questions that mankind have always asked,—“What is life?” “What is Death?”—“Is there Immortality?” “Is there a God?”

The Poet, Whitman says, begets, that is,—he creates something new and significant for the race. The Singer sings songs inspired by the poet. The Singer can be you and me or anyone whom the

poet has inspired to a creative outlook on life.

Let me put it in another way. The Poet or Answerer is like a vine. On the vine hang the singers like a bunch of grapes drawing their life from the vine. Cezanne, who painted in the middle of the last century, we might call a Vine Man. The schools and painters who have followed and been inspired by him have been the fruit, the singers.

I want to make this distinction. When I say “The Artist is an Initiator,”—I do not mean by Artist simply one who makes a living painting pictures as a profession. He may be an artist or he may not. By the Artist I mean a creative seer of deep inner experience who uses the **medium** of the arts to express the experiences of his inner life. To do this he may use poetry, music, painting, architecture or sculpture. He may use the likeness of forms familiar to us,—the ordinary scenes of life,—or he may invent forms and objects to suit himself.

When I speak of art as an initiator, I do not mean technical virtuosity, nor what is loosely called Art. A picture may disclose a marvelous technique and still not be a work of art, or, on the contrary, it may have a very simple unsophisticated technique and be a very great work of art. By Art I mean the Language of Experience. The Art of Music

is to many people a language of experience, whereas, perhaps, to the same people the art of painting is not.

The reason why the art of painting may not initiate an experience in some of us is because we have been trained from childhood to regard the art of painting as an art of imitation. That is, most people demand and expect the painter to imitate nature and produce on canvas a photographic likeness of a scene or an object. This is not the art of painting but the art of illustration and photography. A painting that is an exact imitation of some scene or object, and nothing else,—cannot initiate in us any great illuminating experience. The best it can do is to call up a pleasant sensation of memory or association which may delight us. This is only a hum-drum experience compared to the exaltation and spiritual delight which great painting can give us.

The thing to do is to regard painting as a language and not merely as a piece of decoration to hang on the walls of our homes or in the naves of our churches. When we begin to see painting as a language and are able to read what a great painter has to say to us in his creations, then when we look at a picture the important question for us will not be "what does this picture remind me of?" but,— "What new experience is here?" You will find, when you have experienced what the artist has to say, that subject and artisanship or technique become secondary considerations to you. You will look past the outer into the inner life of the picture and something will happen inside of you.

"Know," says Krishna, "that whenever anything animate or inanimate is produced, it is due to the union of the soul and the body."

This is true of everything that is created from a universe or a man to a work of art. A great work of art has a soul as well as a body,—a part seen with the eyes and a part not seen nor apprehended with the senses.

In choosing a title for this talk I called it, "An Initiator." Every student of Theosophy will know what is meant by

an initiator. Every religion, before it became degraded, had its secret ceremony of the Mysteries, or ceremony of Initiation as it was called, where men who had prepared themselves were initiated into the mysteries of the particular religion to which they adhered.

We are so prone to think of initiation as a ceremony that we forget its real character. If you wish to read a book which has just been published by a Hindu named Dhan Gopal Mukerji called "The Face of Silence," you will find described there one of the ways in which initiation is consummated in India to-day. It is not a ceremony but an individual experience of realization.

We are having initiations all the time, without knowing it. Every time something happens and a new door seems to open so that we see a little further into life and into ourselves, that is an initiation. I believe that creative art is a means of initiation. In fact, in one of the Mahatma Letters we find it said that "Until final emancipation of the soul is consummated the ego must be conscious of the purest sympathies called forth by the effects of high art."

A modern sculptor, Branchusi, has said "Art has too long been tied to religion. Art by itself can save the world."

Branchusi and those who think like him would say that through art can be accomplished the first object of the Theosophical Society, the forming of a nucleus of a brotherhood of Man without distinction of race, sex, caste, colour or creed. If it can do this Art can be considered almost as a religion in its own right. The second object of the Theosophical Society is the study of comparative religions with the help of the secret doctrine of Theosophy. If art is a religion in its own right it is therefore a fitting subject for discussion from a Theosophical platform and it will be found that just as Theosophy illuminates the study of other religions and makes them one, so it illuminates the study of Art, changing it from the dead thing which it has become in the public estimation to a living thing. Not a thing tied on to religion and society but one with religion and society.

The degradation of art may well be compared with the degradation of religion.

I have called art a language. Let me try to explain what I mean. Perhaps I can do it best by speaking of art in terms of nationality or race before mentioning other aspects of it.

Behind every work of art in any medium is the mystery of a creative experience. In a sense a work of art is an incarnation embodying, not just an idea, but the living experience which the artist went through in bringing his creation into being and one of the chief functions of art is to re-create this experience in you and me when we look at it.

Race and nationality have an effect on art. Different ages and different environments produce artists whose experiences are representative of their particular age and race. These men are inspired to paint by the life experience of the people with whom they live. Hence the art of the ages is a summing up of the experience of the people of all times and all races.

Understand I am not speaking of the stories which the old monuments and plaques tell us. It is true that through the plaques and designs of ancient Egypt and ancient Assyria we can learn something of the history and social conditions of the Egyptians and Assyrians. But to the man who can read the language of art, these plaques and monuments have much more than this archeological interest. The very way they are modelled, the very grouping of the figures and their relationship to one another tell us of an attitude toward life, a re-action to form and design which in the last analysis is a philosophic quality.

Through the art of each race we are able to enter into the life and spiritually understand that race and get, as it were, the mysterious something which makes that people different from all other peoples.

Step into an international art exhibition. You will find that just as you can say "This picture is a Rubens; this an El Greco; this a Cezanne; this a Lawren

Harris." So you can say "This is Dutch, this is Spanish, this is French, this is Canadian. Even with so universal an artist as Michael Angelo one could say, without knowing the name of the artist, —this is Italian.

Nationality in races is closely analogous to personality in human beings. Personality in a man embraces all the characteristics and memories of one physical life. If we think of a nation as a Being, its country and climate and society is its physical life. National and social environment attract souls suited to it into incarnation.

Now just as we are able to recognize and understand something of other races through their art so from the art of our own country we are able to understand something of ourselves, and for a Canadian whose race is just now emerging into a national consciousness, to learn something of himself and of his people and to find out wherein they are different from all other peoples, is a true initiation.

There are today pictures being painted by Canadian artists who have been inspired to paint them through a love of the Canadian north and the devotion which these painters feel for their own country is there in their pictures and the pictures have the power to transfer the thrill and devotion which the artists felt to other Canadians when they look at them.

This feeling for one's own country which Canadian art is able to give is not any cheap and shallow nationalism which desires to possess and conquer and stand on its own rights. The only way in which I can describe it is to say it is a religious experience which waters the whole nature as a summer shower waters the dry hard ground and makes things grow where before the soil was a barren spot. It will give you a mystical conception of your own people. It will help you to love them and desire to devote yourself to them. It will initiate in you a creative attitude which gives you a vision of yourself and your people as a master instead of a slave. It brings home the realization that the race in

Canada has the potentialities for creating a culture which will be second to none that has ever been on the earth and that we do not have to borrow inspiration from other lands than our own, but that on the contrary we are capable of inspiring and contributing to the spiritual life of other peoples.

The reason why the racial quality of these Canadian pictures is so thrilling to a Canadian is because as a race we are so young that nine-tenths of us do not know what it is to have a religious feeling about our country. We still think of the old world as the home of our culture and do not believe enough in our own potentialities as culture makers. These pictures help to reveal some of these potentialities to us.

Now I do not want to give the impression that this racial realization in a work of art is the only kind of initiation which painting and other forms of art are able to give. There is another and more universal approach which I have left until the last not meaning thereby to imply that it is the least.

The other approach, and some of our Canadian pictures are capable of being approached in this way, is to read the language of art in its own idiom of line, form, rhythm, design and colour. Writers on art describe this as "The aesthetic approach" but I believe that this term is misleading and will avoid it because there is a tendency, when one becomes engrossed in this approach, to cut oneself off from mankind and make the art experience something separate from life, something which writers call "art for art's sake." So instead of calling it the "aesthetic experience" I will simply call it "The Art Experience."

I had such an experience recently which will perhaps explain what I mean better than any other way I can put it. Down in the sculpture court at the Grange on Dundas Street is a collection of Chinese figures lent by the Royal Ontario Museum. Among them is an iron figure of a Bodhisatva representing one of the disciples of Buddha. It is the figure of a man in meditation.

I came on this statue rather unex-

pectedly the other day just as I was leaving the gallery and stopped to look at it. There is not a single line in it that is unnecessary. It is so perfectly in balance, and every part of it is so perfectly balanced that its poise communicates itself to any one who looks at it. The rhythm of the arms, the quiet rhythm of the features of the face, the curve of the top of the head, the relationship of all parts to one another express a devotion and a simplicity which is utterly disarming. As you look at it you feel ashamed of your possessions and of your efforts and struggles; even those efforts and struggles which you make to attain your highest ideals seem crude and foolish. Here you seem to be looking at pure "Being" which does not struggle and strive but which just "is" and you feel that that is all that is necessary and you say to yourself "That's Real."

Now I have no doubt that part of what I feel in this figure of the disciple of Buddha has been intensified by the thousands of people who may have meditated before it, because it is a very ancient piece, dating back I am told previous to the Ming Dynasty in China about 1355. But this additional feeling of devotion put there by others does not detract from the piece as a work of art. Examining it from the standpoint of "art as an experience" we find that it is a perfect embodiment of the devotional experience of the artist who made it and it is his devotion which is felt today by those who look at the statue whether they be Buddhists or Christians. Its absolute simplicity, its relationship in all its parts, express the essence of the devotional attitude.

And so again we have got back to devotion. You will remember I said, in speaking of the Canadian paintings, that they were an embodiment of a devotional attitude toward this country. Always, in every great work of art, we feel devotion, sometimes to one thing and sometimes to another. It is the divine as well as the human quality. You will feel it in the mural decorations of the Sistine Chapel painted by Michael Angelo. You

will find it in the works of the so-called old masters and in the paintings of El Greco and in some of our Canadian pictures. You will find a great deal of it in Oriental art whether the artist gives us a picture of a Buddha or a simple drawing of a few deer grazing in a wood. Always great art is devotional in quality and the greater the devotion the greater the power of art to move us. Devotion makes a work of art alive in rhythm, line, colour and form, and in the relation of these things to each other. These things—rhythm, line, colour, form and relationship are the language of art whether it be music, painting, architecture or sculpture. In great literature we get the equivalent of them. But line, form, colour and relationship will not speak a language for us unless the artist out of himself has given them meaning.

I have spoken of one or two of the things that art will do for us. First, I have tried to show that through art we may realize our own potentialities and the potentialities of our people and the people of other lands. Second, I have tried to show how in art we come in contact with a devotional attitude which will re-create itself in us.

Now both of these relationships are part of what I call The Creative Attitude, to distinguish it from the conventional attitude.

The man who is on what Theosophists call The Path sometimes finds this creative attitude without the help of art but the moment he finds it he is attracted to art because "the Art way" is the "Way of Life," which is what the Path is. One cannot be on the Path without having the creative attitude.

Krishna calls the Path,—devotion, and in order to have devotion one has to hold a creative attitude. Devotion is described in the Gita as the sacrifice of all our works to the God within, or, as the New Testament puts it, seeking first the kingdom of heaven which is within you. In other words one has to make all the things that happen in every-day life, working materials for the attainment of the inner life of experience.

Now the creative artist does this same

thing when he paints a picture. As I said a moment ago in speaking about the figure of the disciple of Buddha, every line has meaning and builds up toward the feeling which the artist wished to express. The more strongly the artist feels what he wishes to express, the more definitely and precisely he will build, subordinating all his material detail to the one end. This is the artist's creative experience which his creation re-creates in his audience. To see its accomplishment before you in a work of art is for you yourself to have a creative experience, just as I said that to realize the potentialities of one's people through Canadian pictures was to have a creative experience.

It is difficult to describe the nature of a creative experience to anyone who has not had it for himself. As I said a while ago it is a religious experience which could be called an initiation. As Emerson says,—It breaks down the walls of circumstance and we ourselves become artists. Perhaps not painters of pictures but artists in spirit and outlook.

I wish I could make those of you who have not had the experience feel what it is like. You begin, as William Blake says, to create your own systems and to free yourself from the conventional system of your day.

"There are two classes of individuals in the world," says Blake, "Creators and Devourers."

The Devourers think that to get and to accumulate and to feed on others brings more satisfaction than to create and give, but they are mistaken as everyone knows who feels the creative. To get and accumulate is the conventional system. To create and give is the opposite.

You hear it said today that in this age the spirit of reverence has departed from us. The creative attitude given by art will bring it back because the creative person values all things in terms of the inner life. You will go out into the northern woods or into the open spaces and feel the occult thing behind the nature of your own country and carry it away with you and create so that your own people feel it and are replenished.

As Whitman says "You can look up

LETTERS THAT MAY HELP YOU

No. 14

Friend

and down no road but it stretches and waits for you. You see no being, not even God, but you go thither." You see your own people creatively and you feel that for them only to grow prosperous and populous and for them to feed and fall down in awe before the creations of the past, and not create for themselves is to be a nation of devourers and is not good enough for them. You feel that your own people are capable of creating as great and as noble a culture as any that have been in the past or that are in the present and you feel your oneness with them. You welcome and encourage every creative movement, art or otherwise, which you see arising in the country and you have faith that it will succeed. Says Whitman:

The words of the true poems give you more than poems,

They give you to form for yourself poems, religions, politics, war, peace, behaviour, histories, essays, daily life, and everything else,

They balance ranks, colours, races, creeds, and the sexes,

They do not ask beauty, they are sought, Forever touching them or close upon them follows beauty, longing, fain, love-sick.

They prepare for death, yet they are not the finish, but rather the outset,

They bring none to his or her terminus or to be content and full,

Whom they take they take into space to behold the birth of stars, to learn one of the meanings,

To launch off with absolute faith, to sweep through the ceaseless rings and never be quiet again.

H. P. B.'s Magazine—

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Soon after the death of Jehoshua a spook is said to have appeared to Peter and his associates, and assuming the shape of Jehoshua, to have said to those present: “Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to him; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” Whether this self-evident falsehood, contrary to all the doctrines of Christ, was uttered by an Elemental, parading in the astral remains of Jehoshua, or whether it was—like many other sayings contained in the Bible—a pious interpolation made in the interest of the church, the acceptance of this doctrine completely neutralized all that Jehoshua ever taught; it caused divine wisdom, justice, and truth to be henceforth regarded as matters of little importance; it did away with the eternal God of the universe, and established in its place the rule of a man-made church.

In vain the apostle Paul denounced such an erroneous doctrine and said that he was preaching not a belief in a person, but a faith in the universal power of Christ (Galations I. 12, 16), and that those who preached any other Christ but the Logos were teaching errors and belonged to the powers of darkness; his doctrine like that of Jehoshua, was comprehended by few. He was denounced by Peter as being a visionary, and even his epistles were forged and falsified for the purpose of deluding the seekers after the truth. (Gerald Massey—“Paul, the Gnostic Opponent of Peter”).

The foregoing has been condensed from the “Life of Jehoshua” by Franz Hartmann. How much of it is true, how much allegory, the present writer knows not, and cares less.

H. P. Blavatsky in “Secret Doctrine” has this to say:—“Jesus the Initiate (or Jehoshua)—the type from whom the ‘historical’ Jesus was copied.” (S.D. I. p. 577). “Jesus, an Initiate of the Higher Mysteries the Galilean Adept.” (ibidem ii. pp. 566 and 230). And on page 586 quoting Gerald Massey: “The value

of the cross as a Christian symbol is supposed to date from the time when Jesus Christ was crucified. And yet in the 'Christian' iconography of the catacombs no figure of a man appears upon the Cross during the first six or seven centuries. There are all forms of the cross except that—the alleged starting point of the new religion. During some six centuries after the Christian era the foundation of the Christian religion in a crucified Redeemer is entirely absent from Christian art! . . . There is no Christ and no Crucified; the Cross is the Christ even as the *Stauros* (Cross) was a type and a name of *Horus*, the Gnostic Christ.

"The Cross, not the Crucified, is the primary symbol of the Christian Church. The Cross, not the Crucified, is the essential object of representation in its art, and of adoration in its religion. The germ of the whole growth and development can be traced to the cross. And that cross is pre-Christian, is pagan and heathen, in half a dozen different shapes. The Cult began with the Cross, and Julian was right in saying that he waged a 'Warfare with the Cross;' which he obviously considered had been adopted by the A-Gnostics and Mytholators to convey an impossible significance. (Julian, the Emperor, was an Initiate, and as such knew well the 'mystery-meaning' both metaphysical and physical—H. P. B.). During centuries the cross stood for the Christ, and was addressed as if it were a living being. It was divinized at first, and humanized at last."—(The Natural Genesis, by Gerald Massey, p. 433).

"The Jesus-mythos is an allegory of initiation—the mystical story of a Man who by his own efforts became a God" (Preface, Restored New Testament, by James M. Pryse.

Even supposing that the Gospel narrative of the Life of Jesus is true, it would make no difference to the occultist. And for this reason:—On the one hand it would mean only that a certain man in those days had attained to liberation, to the knowledge of his own Higher Self—his own God, which others before (and it is surmised, since) had attained to; on the other hand, the pre-

mise on which the Christian Church bases its teaching, viz: that Jesus by suffering on a cross or being lapidated, thereby appeased the wrath of his Father, Jehovah, and redeemed Humanity, is not admitted for one moment by the occultist who knows the true esoteric teaching.

In previous letters I have shown that most of the higher critics (among them being Churchmen) are agreed that the Gospel account can not possibly be taken in any sense as "history," that the burden of proof of the historicity of the Gospel Jesus rests on the Christian Church and not on its opponents, and that proof is not forthcoming, although that Church has had nearly two thousand years to produce such proofs!

As I said in Letter 12: The occultist does not expect the ignorant, the undeveloped intelligence to understand the esoteric teaching, but he has a right to expect that the self-styled religious teachers should know something of what they are supposed to teach, and to adapt the teaching to the comprehension of his hearers.

A good example of their attitude is seen today. While there may be instances of fraud in the methods of some spiritualists, yet the fact remains that there are some highly educated men and women of fine intellect and high aspirations who assert the truth of spirit communication; the facts in the case are too well attested to be ignored. (Conan Doyle, Flammarion, Oliver Lodge, Wallace, are some of the names that come to one's mind in this connection). Yet, as a body, the Churchmen are against even examining into the phenomena; apparently because, as of old, they are afraid their jobs as mediators between mankind and God will be gone, and that consequently, they would have to earn their living honestly. In the meantime, the Churchmen are bewailing the paucity of their congregations, blaming—in the old days—the saloon, in these days of prohibition, the Sunday motion picture theatres, baseball, and the general godlessness of the people, instead of asking themselves are they true to the trust

of teaching the people TRUTH.

The words of the Jesus of the Gospel can today be applied to the Pharisees and Scribes of the modern Church:—"Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, by preventing them from attaining spiritual knowledge. Ye neither go in yourselves, neither will ye suffer them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, who are blind to the spiritual perception of the truth, while you pretend to be keepers of it, ye blind guides who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. You are like whited sepulchres, which appear beautiful outwardly, but which are within full of dead men's bones and corruption. Wisdom has departed from you, and will not return until you give up your hypocrisy and selfishness, and learn to worship the truth. He who is filled with the spirit of wisdom, possessing spiritual knowledge, is the heaven-ordained priest, the true shepherd, and those who love the truth know his voice; but the merely man-ordained and selfish priests, full of vanity and having no truth in their hearts, are like thieves that enter the sheepfold, not through the legitimate door of direct perception, but by climbing in through the window of argumentation." (Matt. 23. Mark 12, Luke 11).

Throughout the civilised world today—the world that is going through the birth-throes of a new cycle, the people are asking for light and guidance. They have found that prayers to the God of the Church are unanswered; that the murdering Huns prayed to the same God that the British, French, and Americans prayed to,—and for victory. Their loved ones—fathers, brothers, husbands, sons, have been slaughtered by the million, and the end is not yet; they ask, nay, beg and implore for a sign. The only answer the Church can give (for it has no other to offer) is: Have faith, and attend church more frequently, and support the church. In answer to the assertion that some of those who have passed out are sending messages of comfort to their loved ones left grieving behind, the dictum comes:—That is the devil's work;

have nothing to do with it. We, and we only, the custodians of the faith, are the Lord's anointed, and the only properly accredited mediums through whom you can reach heaven and life everlasting!

The world is ready and hungry for the teachings of re-incarnation and karma, and a great work lies ready to the hands of all who are convicted—intellectually or by actual knowledge—of the truth of those teachings to spread them and give them to all who will listen.

At this present time of writing, there is going on a heated controversy between two factions of the Baptist Church.

Yours,
Aseka.

ECONOMIC THEOSOPHY

"Let us examine sacredly whether there is any wrong entrusted to us to set right"—Dickens.

Unemployment and its twin brother—war—are the least understood and at the same time most damaging in their far-reaching effects of all our sociological problems. In fact the others are only particular phases of these two. To get rid of these anti-social dangers our methods of applying palliative measures must give place to a courageous desire to extirpate them.

Perhaps we are yet, in the course of our evolution, too individualistic to make any pronounced progress in the matter. It would seem that there is very little understanding of the real danger of allowing the individual interest to run contrary to that of the public at large. The lesson of 1914-1918 has not been digested. But the great unrest which arises out of such ruinous conflict is a hopeful rather than a discouraging sign of our time. Man, in his evolutionary march, is fast approaching the stage where group or co-operative action will supersede individual action. Brotherhood must replace anti-social selfishness.

We look at a world constantly disorganised by war, strikes, wasteful litigation, unemployment and kindred troubles. Not comprehending the cause, we vainly endeavour to patch up the social

structure; but find it an endless, unprofitable task. This unwillingness to face, nay, determination almost amounting to fanaticism not to face, the solution is far more expensive economically than getting at the root cause would be.

Why has such a dearth of outstanding individuals in all walks of life been so noticeable of late years? The late war displayed no Napoleons, for instance. Evidently coming events cast their shadows before them. The age of letting "George do it" is passing. The group or co-operative age is heralded.

It seems self-evident that there should be no starvation in a country with the natural resources and yearly production of food such as Canada has. Yet the condition foretold by Henry George is now as rife on the comparatively virgin American continent as it is in Europe. Canada should really have no unemployment in the sense that anyone should lack the necessities of physical existence.

Unemployment is a condition of industry where men and women willing and able to work are unable to find work to do: in other words there are not enough jobs to go round. Still our social system operates under the necessity of work being accomplished before physical wants can be supplied.

There are three distinct types of unemployment. These are seasonal, cyclic and chronic.

Seasonal unemployment is caused by climatic conditions and in Canada this type is of great importance. While much could be done in a domestic way to lessen it, it can only be completely relieved by the action taken in regard to the other types.

The next type—cyclic unemployment—is due to fluctuations of industry as seen in the alternate boom and depression. This is very much more serious and is a condition common to all nations which shuts out the tariff nostrum. It is now beginning to be recognized that the most important factor in the condition is the use—or rather the abuse—of financial credit. Any means, therefore, which will assist in controlling financial credit in the interest of the community as a whole and not in the interests of

a few monopolies, will undoubtedly improve, if it does not remove, this condition. It may be that monopoly is the cause of unemployment.

The development of a statistical and commercial information bureau of much greater efficiency than exists at present would seem to be a prime need in any reform measures. This collected information would be available to all industrial concerns. With the increased knowledge of business conditions this would render possible, speculative enterprises and wasteful production would be materially reduced, thus leading to the control of financial credit being greatly simplified.

By far the most important feature in this connection, however, is the lack of purchasing or consuming power. It is the inability of the public to buy or consume the goods they produce which is the real core of the problem. Only by studying the consuming end of production do we come to realize the curse of monopoly. Bellamy put it in a nutshell when he stated: "by reason of your profits, there are eventually no profits." In effect the present financial system endeavours to make the part equal the whole, which is clearly absurd.

The cure for this condition depends upon a true understanding of the function of money. Money is purely a medium of exchange. It is not wealth but merely approved tickets to draw upon the community's store of wealth. Our system, however, insists on trying to get something for nothing and that only leads to demoralization. Hence the amount of money in circulation at any time should be sufficient to enable the consumption of the amount of goods in sight.

C. V. Craik.

* * *

There is one eternal Law in nature, one that tends to adjust contraries and to produce final harmony. It is owing to this law of spiritual development superceding the physical and purely intellectual, that mankind will become freed from its false gods, and find itself finally—SELF REDEEMED.

—Secret Doctrine, ii. 420.

THE CANADIAN THEOSOPHIST

THE ORGAN OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN CANADA

Published on the 15th of every month.



Edito.—Albert E. S. Smythe.

Entered at Toronto General Postoffice as second-class matter.

Subscription, One Dollar a Year.

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CALGARY Lodge—

Mr. E. H. L. Knechtel

EDMONTON Lodge—

Mr. F. A. Belcher
Mr. G. I. Kinman
Mr. E. H. L. Knechtel
Mr. G. C. McIntyre
Mr. J. E. Mecredy
Mr. Kartar Singh
Mr. R. D. Taylor

VANCOUVER Lodge—

Mr. J. E. Mecredy

The present General Secretary was nominated by several Lodges and as no other was nominated he stands elected.

It is understood that all these members have consented to stand for election; but if not it is requested that notification be sent at once to the General Secretary. The ballots are being prepared and will be sent out not later than May 2. They will be returnable so as to reach the General Secretary on June 1, when the voting will close. Scrutineers will be appointed by the local Toronto Lodges, and it is hoped to obtain the services once more of Mr. Winchester to conduct the counting of the votes, which are to be cast under the Hare-Spence system of Proportional Representation.

It should be clearly understood that only members who are fully paid up for the year ending June 30, 1927, are entitled to vote, and to these only will ballots be issued. The ballot is a secret one, full instructions regarding the process being given on the ballot form, which should be carefully read by the voter.

FELLOWS AND FRIENDS

Mr. C. E. Greenway of the Calgary Lodge died from a stroke of paralysis last month.

* * *

Mr. Housser's article on "Art, the Initiator" was given as an address to the Toronto Lodge, March 20.

* * *

The General Secretary of the T.S. in Australia writes to say that "the broadcasting station in which Mr. J. M. Prentice was an announcer has never had anything to do with the Theosophical Society and the Proprietors would be very indignant since they were unsympathetic to the Theosophical Society were they to read your statement that their station is 'practically under control of the Theosophical movement in Australia.' The only Theosophical Station in the world is 2GB Sydney which is entirely under Theosophical control. This station was established in August 1926 by the Theosophical Society in Australia." Since then Mr. Prentice has gone to New Zealand.

REINCARNATION

(Concluded from page 4)

According to the church teaching, a soul is newly created and born—let us say—into the family of a king, a captain of industry, a millionaire, or a learned man; that soul having all the advantages such a birth would give him. (He is son number one).

Another soul is created for the body of a child born in poverty in a slum, sired by a bum whose idea of bliss is a continued drunk on rot-gut, and dammed (in more ways than one) by a gin-drinking drab who would disgrace a colony of Bushmen or Hottentots.

The first child, born to affluence, is started on life's voyage with a good solid keel beneath his feet, the sails of his ship all set to the favouring breezes under a sunshiny cloudless sky. The other child, the offspring of the flotsam and jetsam of a slum, starts off in life with the seeds of tuberculosis, syphilis or other dread disease in his frail, half-starved body. His ideals, if he has any—are those of the gutter and brothel. As he grows up to the age of manhood, his aim is to get as much easy money as possible by hook or by crook. The poor ignorant fellow is handicapped from the very starting point!

Who is responsible for the great handicap under which this outcast runs life's race? According to the church teaching, his heavenly Father—God, Who, we are assured, is a God of Love!

In other words: God, Who is said to do something that you—an average man or woman—would condemn if done by a human father. Your human sense of justice which rebels against such shocking in-justice is, seemingly, higher than that of God—the source of Justice, human and divine; the God from Whom you get your sense of Justice.

May there not be something wrong in the teaching of the modern Church? The occultist asserts there is.

I have inquired of priests, parsons and ministers of many denominations for an explanation and solution of this question,

and the best answers they could give me were: "The ways of God are inscrutable," and "probably, those who had a hard time in this earth-life may have it made up to them in some way in the future life."

To the reincarnationist who believes that brains were given us to use, the answer is comparatively a simple one.

Although we know that LAW is operative in the whole Universe, we do not inquire into the working of that LAW.

The believer in reincarnation asserts that souls are not newly created when a baby makes its appearance in this world.

He asserts that souls of human beings (Egos) have existed for millions and trillions of years. During those millions of years the soul has been developing, step by step, through the elemental, the mineral the vegetable, and the animal kingdoms; now it has entered the human kingdom, and is at about the half-way stage of its development in the human kingdom. When it completes its development it will become a full-fledged MAN; an entity which, compared to us at our stage of development, will be a God. (I Cor: iii, 16—"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" also I Cor: vi., 19—"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?") Evidently St. Paul knew the teaching!

The teaching of the Ancient Wisdom is a more grandiose concept of what MAN is, and what he will become, than the teaching of the Church which teaches that a man after a few short years will die, and if he has lived an evil, vicious life but repents at the last minute—the eleventh hour—he will go to a beautiful heaven to sing Alleluias for ever and ever, Amen. Or, if the man dies "in his sin"—as the saying is—he goes to a hell, a place of torment for eternity.

Visualize, if you can, a drunken bum whose idea of happiness is plenty of booze, money, women, and lots of time to enjoy them, being "washed whiter than snow" and translated into the Christian heaven, to join the lovely angels playing harps or blowing trumpets!

That would not be a heaven to him; rather a hellish kind of nightmare.

As the child goes to school, day after day, resting every night, so Man (the Ego—the real man) comes to this Earth-school to learn its lessons, life after life; the time between lives being a period of rest.

Just as the child in school is given the various problems of life to work out. And both child and Man have certain rules laid down to which they must conform (for their own good and the good of their fellow-students), which, when broken, merits punishment. In the case of Man, the rules of Life are given him by the Teachers (the Great Ones of Humanity) who know the LAW, and who instruct Man in that LAW. It is not merely chance or coincidence when we find a Lao Tse, Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster, Hillel, Jesus, Plato, Emerson, Huxley and even Buechner (an atheist) asserting that "as a man soweth, so shall he reap!" "Do unto others as you would have them do to you;" or "Love your neighbour as yourself." To the reincarnationist this is not only significant but also reassuring; for he knows that those statements are expressions of the Law of Justice in the physical, psychic and spiritual worlds.

Just as the child is punished for breaking the Law governing its life, so the Man is punished for breaking the Law governing his life. "Punishment" is hardly the best word to use because it is, really, only the natural effect of causes due to Man's wilfulness in breaking the Law made for his benefit.

Fire has the law of its being, viz: to burn. If one uses fire properly it can be useful to Man; but if Man deliberately puts his hand into fire expecting that, because he wishes it, it will not burn him, one cannot blame the fire for burning, but only the Man for his ignorance or foolishness. If the LAW of the universal Life could be upset merely because of the whims of Man, we would not have a universe at all; we would have CHAOS.

To the man who does it, it may be great sport and a pleasurable sensation to "put one over on his neighbour," to

take advantage of him in a business deal, to swindle him out of his property, to take advantage of a maid's innocence and seduce her, to play the hypocrite with a friend while fornicating with his friend's wife, to play the lick-spittle in order to live on others, to sell shoddy for wool, to take advantage of another's necessity; plenty of instances will occur to my reader's mind.

For many milleniums Man has been doing those things toward his "neighbour," little heeding the instructions given him by his Teachers telling him that "As ye sow, so shall ye reap," that "curses come home to roost," that "do unto others as you wish to be done by" are not based on foolish sentiment, but on Cosmic LAW, the Law of Justice, the Law of Compensation—as Emerson calls it, the Law of Karma—as the Hindu scriptures call it.

If a man works hard, sweats blood in building a picture, a poem, a cathedral, or a business, he might say, "That is good; and as I did it, as I am responsible for it, I ought to get the results." Logical and just! But suppose that instead of that work being good, it is evil, what then? Why, the man responsible should reap the results of that, too! Logical and just, isn't it? If you, instead of studying your books, played hookey from school, isn't it right and just that you should suffer from the results of throwing away your opportunities to learn?

Now, apply that to human life and you can easily see the "why" and the "wherefore" of the various ills that man is heir to; and, also, the logicalness of the teaching of reincarnation.

In previous lives we have swindled and have been swindled; we have been harmed in many ways and we have harmed others. We come back, life after life, and again and again meet each other, and we are given the opportunity to learn the lesson, and to pay back to those we have harmed; also to reap the good we have done to others in previous lives. When those ancient debts are brought forth for our payment, the paying seems hard, generally is hard because it seems unjust; but the net result is—when we un-

derstand the working of the LAW—remedial. It develops the finer feelings, sympathy for others (for, suffering ourselves, we understand what others must feel in a similar predicament), regard for the rights of others. We tend to and develop more of the soul-qualities, and in so doing, rid ourselves of the traits of the animal part of us. That is a part of the process called evolution. We have come up from the moneron and amoeba, up through the various stages to our present position; we are intended to evolve up and still higher until we shall be as Gods—spiritually great beings. What a grand conception! What a magnificent goal to live and struggle for!

Are the occultists the only ones who believe this doctrine? It may surprise you to learn that nearly three-fifths of the human race accept and believe the teaching of reincarnation at this present day.

The ancient civilization of Egypt was built on this as a fundamental truth, and taught it to Pythagoras, Empedocles, Plato, Virgil and Ovid, who scattered it through Greece and Italy. The swarming millions of India made this thought the foundation of their enormous achievements in government, architecture, philosophy and poetry. It was a cardinal element in the religion of the Persian Magi. Caesar found its tenets among the Gauls. It was an essential principle of the Druid faith, and as such was impressed upon the Celts and Britons. In the old civilization of Peru and Mexico it prevailed. The Eleusinian mysteries of Greece and the Cabalistic rituals of the Hebrews expressed this idea. The Jews adopted it after the Babylonian captivity through the Pharisees, Philo of Alexandria and the doctors. John the Baptist was to them a second Elijah. Jesus was commonly thought to be a re-appearance of one of the old prophets. Reincarnation played an important part in the thought of Origen and several other leaders among the early Christian Fathers.

Many philosophers like Scotus, Kant, Schelling, Leibnitz, Schopenhauer and the younger Fichte, Bruno, Herder, Les-

ing, Goethe have fathered it. Nearly all the poets profess it.

About 2,000 years ago there appears to have been a general expectation among the Jews that the coming of the Messiah was to be heralded by the re-appearance upon earth of the prophet Elijah; this being founded upon the text in Malachi "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Jesus being asked, said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist if ye will receive it, this is Elias (Elijah) which was for to come" (Matt: xi. 14) And again, Jesus said to his disciples, "Elias is come already Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist." (Matt: xvii. 12-13).

Coming to the Early Christian Church we find that Origen refers to pre-existence as the general opinion. Clemens Alexandrinus, Jerome, Nenesius taught it. Justin Martyr expressly speaks of the soul inhabiting more than once the human body. St. Jerome, who, it should not be forgotten, helped to prepare the Vulgate (the Latin Version of the Scriptures, and the only version the Roman Catholic Church admits is authentic) believed in it.

The believer in reincarnation realizes that he is a Son of God and immortal. He believes that although he has made mistakes, gross mistakes, in this and in past lives, nevertheless, if he strives to do the right, the LAW, being administered by Great Intelligences, will be merciful as well as just; for the purpose of Man's evolution is not to damn him for an eternity because of mistakes, but to enlarge his knowledge, love and wisdom by and through his experiences in this and other worlds.

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out." Rev: iii. 12.

"None sees the slow and upward
sweep
By which the soul from life-depths
deep
Ascends,— unless, mayhap, when
free,

With each new death we backward
see

The long perspective of our race
Our multitudinous past lives trace."

—A Record—by William Sharp, "Fiona
MacLeod."

New York City.

John O'Neill.

THE TRINITY

Seeing that all matter, as known, may be resolved into finer states unto the gaseous, it is reasonable to believe with modern science and the teachings of the Eastern Philosophies that beyond all matter, even beyond the gaseous state there exists a root-substance, a Mother Nature or Pater-Aether, an Akasha, as the Hindu philosophers term it, from which, as a primordial Substance all matter is produced. The word substance is used in this case to express the idea of an unseen but persisting root-cause of all matter, literally, that which sub-stands or stands beyond, or under, matter.

Matter may be resolved, then, into finer states or conditions, so that as there are grades upon grades of matter extending from the densest solids to the finest and most rare gases and beyond to electrical matter, it may be accepted that the universe as regards its exteriorization, is built up from this root-substance graded into different degrees. It is also to be understood that matter, in its essence, is really indestructible. For, when all matter has been resolved into its ultimate atoms, into a general atomic state it cannot be said that it has ceased to exist even though it has ceased to appear.

The conception is, then, that Spirit and Matter, Life and Form, are opposite poles of one and the same Substance. This is the assertion metaphysically stated, though it may also be explained theologically. In this sense Spirit and Matter are aspects of God who, in creating a universe must, as far as the human mind can understand the idea, polarize Himself, or, as it were, send out two aspects of Himself. It may be presented in two ways to suit the taste of the orthodox or heterodox, exotericist or

esotericist. Theologically expressed it may be said that if God creates the universe "out of nothing," as some still maintain, merely by an exercise of the Will, it is not, therefore, to be imagined that God actually makes something which did not previously exist or subsist in God's nature. It may be accepted that He "Created" matter, yet that which is produced must not only have a producer but a root or matrix. A tree does not grow say from a seed or cutting, even though it is produced, in a sense, by the gardener. Hence, even if it be accepted for the sake of argument that God did create the universe out of nothing then that "nothing" is God's own SELF, God's own Nature. For, "out of nothing, nothing can be made." If this word nothing be derogatory to the theological ideas of God then the word may be changed even though the idea remains essentially the same. Thus it may be said that God, being All in All, has in God's SELF all potentialities, Power, all life that is causative, but equally form or Substance that is capable of being produced and moulded into form. Yet these two are only aspects of God. They are one inasmuch as they subsist in God. In this sense creation necessitates causative and formative ideas or Spirit and Matter in one. In another sense, not to offend religious susceptibilities, God may be said to produce (necessarily from Himself for there is none but God in an absolute sense, He being All in All) the opposites called Spirit and Matter, and yet remain supreme or beyond them. In this way arises the IDEA of a primordial though not an absolute Trinity.

In whatever manner the subject be viewed this apparent and almost real quality of Spirit and Matter cannot be avoided for it is obvious to all either (a) that Form is everywhere ensouled by Life (b) that Life and Form exist as independent realities or (c) that matter is essentially living containing in itself "The promise and potentiality of Life" or that life contains the promise and potentiality of densification.

No one of these is correct as an isolated statement, but the three are seen

as one to the knower of Reality. As the Hebrew Qabalists say, "only in the silence can the three be seen as one." It must be noted however, that the Qabalists do not in any way refer to the orthodox ecclesiastical view of a Personal Trinity, though the idea is essentially true in its deeper sense.

Matter, then, may be considered as varying in density from solid to gaseous and from the latter to the finest ethers and then again to states of such infinite tenuity as to transcend all ideas of materiality and thus touch what may be called the lowest rung of the ladder of Spirit. The latter in turn modifies itself and gradually becomes less fine or if the word may be used, denser, and not only "Descends" into matter but in its lowest state actually becomes, or even is, Matter.

In other words, there is one Eternal and Illimitable REALITY—GOD. The Reality, seeing that it either causes the appearance of Matter with Life as its ensouling Power, or actually is these opposites ITSELF, must have within it a power of producing opposites, of dividing a one-ness and yet bringing together and uniting the opposites produced.

It may then be said in considering pre-creation or that state which is previous to the appearance of things, that God is Absolute, the All, and as the All includes every idea and every possibility, holds them, as it were, in solution, or in potentia, God is therefore both LIFE and SUBSTANCE, and likewise the Power polarizes them and makes them appear as if they were opposites, whereas they are truly one in essence, aspects and yet parts of the Divine Unity.

Here is to be seen, for purposes of description only and not as actual separated realities, triune unity, three which yet are one, no one being greater nor less than the other.

This Trinity may be viewed as three states of consciousness in one, three Powers in one, but it is also to be viewed as a Trinity of Life, Substance, and the Relation between them. In this sense it is a Trinity of Power working in a Trinity of Form, a Hexagon of Spirit blended with Matter. For full explanation see

"Language, Letters and Numbers" by the writer.

That the Trinity is fundamental in almost all ancient religions might well be proved by quotations from the many works on this subject, whether amongst the most ancient of peoples such as the Mayas, amongst the Aryans, Chaldeans, Zoroastrians, Greeks and Romans, -in fact, in every ancient land and almost every religion this idea of a triune God is always to the fore. It is useless, however, to burden the reader with the proof which is to be found in so many books. If details should be required they will be seen in Williamson's "Great Law" and also in Doan's "Bible Myths," the latter however being devoted mainly to disproving orthodox belief and showing it all as a mere Suncult, whilst the former is more sympathetic and constructively religious.

Finally, then, the Trinity has to be understood metaphysically in its relation to the universe whether create or uncreate, visible, or invisible, manifest or unmanifest. This has already been explained as LIFE, SUBSTANCE, and the RELATION between them. The one Life—Substance is then polarized for purposes of creation so that "opposites" appear and Spirit or Life works in and with Matter or Form, their union after separation being possible because they are in reality parts of one another, for "things which are equal to the same thing, are equal to one another" as Euclid states. It is this Relation between opposites, the Holy Ghost of the orthodox, the Fohat of the Buddhist, which brings all these things together. The Three are One, a Unity manifesting itself, showing itself forth as if it were a Trinity.

A fuller explanation will be found in the writer's "Amen, the Key to the Universe."

Leonard Bosman.

* * *

Nor is there any need of proselytizing. As remarked by the wise Cicero, "Time destroys the speculations of man, but it confirms the judgments of nature." Let us bide our time.

—Secret Doctrine, ii. 451.

SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF PHENOMENA

That scientific men and scientific organizations have a vital duty to study the mysteries of ghosts, mediums, and psychic phenomena is urged by Professor McDougall, of Harvard university, in an impressive argument printed recently in *The Forum*. In all ages, says Dr. McDougall, the mass of mankind has believed in the occurrence of certain phenomena which have excited wonder because they seem to show that a few persons possess supernormal capacities.

The essential question raised by these alleged supernormal phenomena is this: Can we find in them empirical evidence that mind transcends the categories of mechanistic science?

"The time has come, I urge, when men of science should combine and, by a concentrated and sustained effort, settle this great question forever. If organized science would adopt, in this matter, the truly scientific attitude; if it would support psychical research freely and unreservedly, then every type of the alleged supernormal phenomena could be investigated adequately and evaluated critically. And if, after fifty years of psychical research thus supported and cultivated, no such evidence should be found to have withstood the application of scientific method, then, at last, science might be able to maintain, with justice, the attitude which at present it assumes dogmatically and uncritically.

"If, on the other hand, the verdict after fifty years should be that some things do happen which cannot be reconciled with a strictly mechanistic science, that will not mean, as has sometimes been asserted, that science is thereby overthrown and destroyed. It may merely prove that mind is what all men, the few scientific extremists excepted, have always held it to be, namely, a creative activity that cannot be brought within the bounds set by the mechanistic categories."

THE SOLAR GOD

"The Sun is the heart of the Solar World (System) and its brain is hidden behind the (visible) Sun. From thence, sensation is radiated into every nerve centre of the great body, and the waves of the life-essence flow into each artery and vein The planets are its limbs and pulses" (commentary). I. 541.

Svabhavat Plastic essence that fills the Universe is Root of all things, the body of the Soul that which Ether is to Akasa.

Law is eternal and uncreated. Duty is Law, Law is Duty. All manifestation has taken place under these terms Cosmic Substance, Ideation, Energy. Whatever emerges in the Universe comes in the model and from the life of the Universe or an aspect of the Universe itself.

TREADMILL OF DESIRE

One plunges to his fevered breast
To rid him of an ache,
A dagger or the loathly crest
Of an envenomed snake,
And hurtles fiercely to his rest
With all his soul at stake.

And one with fasting and with prayer
Defends his troubled heart:
He dons a sack and crops his hair
And leaves the poisoned dart
Of passion to his fellows' care
With all his worldly part.

Another snares the jade desire
In traps his mind has wrought
And laughs to see a ghost expire
Beneath a common thought
Which kills as well the mystic fire
Of love that he has sought.

And I, with all, am here confessed—
I've fasted with the priest,
Have held the snake and dagger best,
And studied till I ceased
To love, and thought desire a jest
In man or maid or beast.

Toronto.

Norman Hainsworth.

A TRUE FUNDAMENTALISM

The idea of Evolution is helping, in a word, to put before ordinary folk the scheme of life and creation in a somewhat new light. We men are seen as able, and called on, to cooperate in the great divine work. It puts before all men the fact that, by God's spirit in them, men have climbed far, and may yet climb much farther. Its call to us is "Quit you like men. Be strong." "To believe in Evolution," it has been happily said, "is to make a man take off his hat to the past and his coat to the future."

I will now conclude, on a more personal note, these fragmentary remarks; written not without difficulty, in my ninetieth year. I do not belong to this generation, but I know that . . . nothing will permanently "grip" but Truth, and Truth is slowly won; for it cannot be won unless men will, for its sake, relinquish some things they have thought to be true.

These words, written at the age of ninety years by Canon James M. Wilson, of Worcester, England, are taken from his essay on Christianity and Evolution, and are the conclusions of a learned scholar and great thinker. He is a fundamentalist of a far different type than those who rest on the false foundations of conclusions of men of the past who in their interpretations of life were handicapped by an utter ignorance of the laws of nature and life, and who struck to the letter of the law as they misread it in ancient scriptures which they did not understand. "To the Evolutionist Christian," says Canon Wilson, "the conviction that 'in the beginning' there must have been Reason, Mind, Purpose, Personality, the Logos,—in a word, God—and that He is shown, in Jesus Christ as in none other, but in some degree in all men, is the supreme inspiring message of the Gospel. It is the at-one-ment, the true relation of men to God. Is this a cold faith? It is white-hot. It fires man with a new life. He is the child and the agent of God; an actor in the vast drama, a fragment of the Eternal."

CHARLES W. ELIOT'S VIEW

Charles W. Eliot, president emeritus of Harvard, who died at the age of 92 last month, was the inheritor of much that made the New England sages the backbone of American thought. Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Whittier, Longfellow, Alcott, Hawthorne, Holmes, and Whitman of the same vein, cannot be ignored in their practical knowledge of life. Eliot made Harvard over in this likeness. He became generally recognized as the "first American citizen." He was astonished himself at the effect of his famous remark about a five foot shelf of books containing all the essentials of a liberal education. The matter ended in the publication of an actual shelf of books selected by him, and the sales at the time of his death had mounted to 14,541,426, worth over twenty million dollars. And yet some people say there is no money in high-browism. Among the many wise advices he gave we have room for very little, but let us take two. Unwavering love is the basis of genuine, enduring marriage, and the price to be paid for unwavering love is personal sacrifice. Even in small things this self-denial for another, particularly for one's life partner, bears fruit in happiness." The other point deals with the pessimism which concedes victory to materialism in America. "We must restore our collapsed religious and moral ideas," he says, "through a persistent will to culture. Our youth should read, read, read. Science may facilitate the use of the senses in acquiring knowledge—through motion pictures and the radio. But I do not believe these will supplant the surest process of instruction—reading. I have never heard the radio and shall never speak over it. I have never been interested in motion pictures, although I discern some value in them. I know that while science may improve the ease and pleasure of life, it can never replace the will to learn as an instrument of culture."

THE HARVEST AND THE FIELD

But a very few even of Christian students appear to understand the full significance of the frequent Bible image of the harvest and the reaper as applied to our lives on earth. It will take many generations to remove the idea that St. Paul meant the physical body of flesh when he speaks of the body dying and being raised incorruptible, although he is careful to warn his readers that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom." It will probably not be abandoned until a new cataclysm or an ice age wipes out all but the seed humanity left to perpetuate and renew the race, as geologists tell us has happened four times, although ethnologists cannot perceive the implication that on these four occasions civilizations as great and indeed much greater than ours has yet become, were swept out of existence. To the individual, however, it usually does not matter whether he dies alone or among millions. He passes into the great mystery without any attendant, and his departure is a solitary one whether he is conscious of companions or dies on a desolate island. His harvest is a strictly personal one, and he should be aware of what is to be garnered and what is left as chaff and straw to be burned. If we follow the image fully, and there is no doubt from the frequency of its use that it is an illuminating image and was felt to convey more of the truth than any other could, we shall learn much from its contemplation. "The field is the world," said the Master, but there is a microcosm as well as a macrocosm, and each man has a world of his own consciousness and its vehicles. He does not save the ground but the harvest, and the ground remains for other sowings and reapings. It is the seed that is sown, and the seed, in turn that is garnered, and is of importance, not the ground in which it is sown or from which the harvest is reaped.

THE DIVINE WISDOM

Theology is known among its exponents as the Queen of Sciences, because it is supposed to include all others. Sim-

ilarly, Theosophy, the Divine Wisdom, does not exclude any form of Wisdom or Truth. It is, perhaps the result of the many strange ideas that have grown up among the members of the Theosophical Society, even fostered by leading members of it, that Dr. Alger has formed the opinion that Theosophy is only a branch of occultism. The older students conceived of Occultism as a branch of Theosophy, and a minor one at that.

When the Theosophical Society was formed, it had a clause in its Constitution permitting the affiliation of any body with kindred aims and spirit. There would be no need to consider a new organization if the T. S. had stood by its former methods. The name has sunk in the view of many to something lower than a science or a religion. Theosophy is not only a science and a religion, but also a philosophy.

Theosophy is a world old title, and no one need be ashamed of it except those who have shamed it by their conduct. It was Brahma Vidya in ancient India, and the Tao in China, and Egypt and Persia had their names for it. If the practice of some in the present have tended to narrow its meaning the onus lies with them. St. Paul thought it one of the greatest titles he could apply to the Christos, who was not begotten but was a Divine Presence.

But we have managed it so that people, instead of taking a nobler thought of Theosophy have been led to associate it with the vile things of the earth, and even its friends shun those who have been led to it by a false banner.

Science itself would lose its reputation if its leading exponents were men of the stamp of Captain Cook who claimed the discovery of the North Pole, or the German Haeckel who altered an anatomical drawing to make it support his theory of evolution. The rank and file of men of science are truer to fact and experience than the members of the Theosophical Society have been, or there would not have been such explanations as this to be made.

A.E.S.S.

THE WAY OF TRUTH

Countess Bela Zichy assures the reader that her book, "The Way of Truth," is not to be taken as a novel but as a chronicle of actual fact. She presents herself as a society butterfly with no interests in the world outside her domestic relations, which are of an **unhappy** character. In this condition she starts automatic writing and falls under the influence of three guides, one of whom appearing one morning apparently hypnotizing her, scares her so much that she awakens the vicinity with her screams. However, she learns "Blind Obedience" and one is not surprised to hear that after this she is informed that she must join the Roman Catholic Church, which accordingly she does later in order to take advantage of what appear to the outsider the somewhat loose conceptions of the marriage ceremony. It is not a marriage unless performed by the Church in proper form, and accordingly, though she had been married many years to a man who was an incompatible companion, the marriage was not regarded as valid, and she as far as can be gathered was ranked as a vestal. There is nothing in the book to suggest that one should look within for guidance. All her instruction and all her guidance was to come from outside, and to be accepted on authority. Those who prefer the sacerdotal path will find it described here, and may employ themselves in distinguishing between the system and that of Black Magic, if they can. The means by which she was impelled to believe in earlier incarnations were purely those of "suggestion" and hypnotism. Many may be led to think that this is Theosophy from the imprint of "The Theosophical Publishing Co. (Price Five Shillings).

ORIGIN OF OIL

In a recent parlour talk in Toronto, Frank Moody of Calgary gave a most lucid explanation with illustrations from the natural rock of the origin of the oil deposits of the earth. Demonstrating that they had a marine origin and occurred in the limestone formations, he

pointed out that the same deposits are being made in deep sea bottoms as the result of the accumulation of animal and other organic matter mixed with the shells and other calcareous refuse from diatoms and such minute creatures. Under pressure these deposits form great thicknesses and in the strata thus created little or large cavities are formed where the organic matter has condensed into oil. He showed examples of these cavities or "vugs" broken open which he had found filled with oil. Some geologists have attributed the formation of oil to volcanic action. The only thing that volcanic action had to do with oil was to break up the strata and release the oil from these deposits great or small as they might be. The effect of the eruption from below with an upward thrust of such vast upheavals as the Rocky Mountains was to crumple the strata lying near into a series of wave-like formations. Under the capstone of such up-tilted strata the oil deposits were to be found. Volcanic action was the result of the action of water on chemical deposits which generated great heat, and was the source of the hot springs found in various places. Water was fatal to the deposit of oil, and would destroy the value of any oil well, he said. The geological formations of western Canada made Alberta, Southern Saskatchewan, part of Manitoba, and Northern British Columbia the greatest oil fields in the world, he declared. Students of the Secret Doctrine will find Mr. Moody's observations of geological fact of prime interest.

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One of the reasons for . . . secrecy may be the undoubtedly serious difficulties and hardships of chelaship and the dangers attending Initiation. The modern candidate has, like his predecessor of old, either to conquer or die; when, which is still worse, he does not lose his reason. There is no danger to him who is true and sincere, and, especially, unselfish. For he is thus prepared before hand to meet any temptation.

Secret Doctrine, iii. 311.

"THE KABBALAH"

A new Edition of the late Dr. W. Wynne Westcott's book, "An Introduction to the Kabbalah," has been brought out by John Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London. It has been enlarged by several pages and the addition of useful diagrams and will be a welcome text to those who are taking part in the revival of Kabbalic interest which is engaging attention just now. Dr. Westcott's recent death in South Africa makes the appearance of this second edition after 16 years an appropriate tribute to his memory. As the Secret Doctrine of the Old Testament it would be of the greatest help to the present decadent religion of the Churches to know that the Jeohovah of the Old Testament of the profane, as a tribal deity with his offensive characteristics is not a conception of the Hebrew Secret Doctrine. The glorious ideal of the Ain Soph, the Limitless, and "The Boundless Light" that appears from it as Kether, the Crown of Manifestation, are more philosophic, more satisfying and more inspiring to those who seek for the truth about the Absolute. The book is priced at 3s. 6d.

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